3 Dec-
1916

Hogarth.

Sunday

Dearest,

We have now got £15 from the Income Tax, instead of the £35 we hoped for — As the press costs £20, we are rather hard up just now, I'm afraid we shall have to wait to buy it until March, unless we can raise some money on the Vanity Fair Page. D'you think there is any chance of selling this before Christmas? — I don't remember what you settled to do — Of course, if it's better to wait, we must. My fear is that the £15 will be used for house expenses, & the hope of the press disappear —

Saxon is here, saying he feels that he must now look after his body, as his mind

is more settled, now that he sees he cant get what he wants. He reads Jane Austen to Barbara, & says, she is extremely natural & nice to him, but I think he's pretty hopeless - However, one can't be sure whether he's really in love, as other people are; perhaps he would be content if B. married Nick & he became a member of the household. I think he means to stay some time with you -

I've had a letter from Mrs Booth, describing Charlie's death, which was very peaceful, & he knew them all & only died because his body was entirely worn out - so it seems to be a typical ending for that family - She seems to have the deepest feeling for us all.

If you ever feel lonely, which I dont suppose you do, I could always come down for a night or two in the middle of the week - But I suppose you will be having Snow & Saxon -

We heard Desmond introduce Shaw's lecture; & he spoke so long that the audience coughed him down, which was rather terrible. I saw old Dobbin & her husband - much alike; & quite unchanged.

LB.

NYPL

HAMILL 6/1/66

Dec 12
1916

Hogarth.
Tuesday.

Dearest,

I'm afraid I can't come, because we have people dining here on Wednesday, & we dine out on Saturday — However, I hope I shall see you next week, & perhaps you'll ask me later. We shall be coming down next Thursday to Asheham, & I think we shall stay a fortnight, so I daresay you'll see as much of me as you want to. It's very exciting about your new children. I suppose Ambers' brat is the bastard, which is said to make them interesting. Do you think Saxon has any chance? or what is their relationship? I think we will have Ka for Christmas, & perhaps Desmond. but as the servants aren't coming we shall be alone for the most part. I very much want to see Charleston. It is said the Stops have a special sunny room there. kept for them. — Yr B.

Dec. 27
1916

Asheham,

Wednesday.

Dearest,

Would it suit you if we came over on Monday, & I spent the night? We should arrive about tea time, & Leonard would fetch me the next day.

I'm very well, but Craig thinks I've been losing weight too fast, & wants me not to walk much; & as I very much want to avoid having to go to bed, I am being very cautious. But he was very cheerful —

I think we go back on Thursday next — but it's perfect down here. If I don't hear, we shall

turn up on Monday afternoon. I
am longing for a good gossip with
my dear Dolphin.

Yr B.

NYPL

1917

Hogarth House

Jan. 17th.

Dearest,

How nice it will be for you if I fill this entire page with Gossip, as I mean to do. Before starting, I may tell you all the kind unselfish acts I've done on your behalf — some fruitless its true, but what is an act if judged by its fruit? Often no better than a rotten quince. Well — yesterday I went to Robersons & bought 3½ lb: tubes of white paint. Mr Roberson was most attentive & charming, & remarked that several people had been in for white paint lately, which he would sell as long as he had any. The difficulty about paints is that theyre made with oil, has to be dipped in a bath of oil, or after the first or second shot I daresay, it would explode, for the cartride cools quicker than the in. That means one thousand gallons of oil for each gun — & when the guns dipped in the oil, d'you think much oil is left? no, not a drop — But you come & ask me for what you want & I'll let you have it — your brown paper books are sold out, but there may be others in a fortnight. As Mr? Grant refuses to tell me her watchmakers name, being doubtless a good deal upset still by the burglary & the Bird, I can't take any steps about your watch. Duncan's continues to go — only any thing would wound up though, I could of course ask if there's It shows signs of growth too. It is passing into the currency. I may say that the current into which I now drop my little (I must a will avoid what shocks Julian — although it would be vivid & picturesque to bring in ken the seat which is always frozen at Charleston) — the centre of life, I should say, is now undoubtedly the 17 Club. I'm going to give you tea there; & you may write a letter on stamped paper, & they have nib, a red ink —

Do you want the white paint sent, or shall I keep it until you come?

the sort that runs, I mean. The chief disfigurements, if one dislikes one's friends, are Babs Hannay in a crimson dress like a servants petticoat, & Jen don't care about Faith I believe, but she's only sometimes there. Alix however is quite invariable, & I suppose permanent now that she's been finally ousted from Gorden Square which operation, she told me yesterday, was firmly carried out by Norton or Maynard or both. She is now trying to fix herself upon Fredegond, & it's like watching a poor silver fish enveloped by a mass of jelly fish, to hear them debating about a house which Alix wants to share, & Gerald won't let Fredegond take with Alix, & Fredegond of course half promises both, & Alix intones like a funeral bell, & becomes more & more insistent, though incapable of making up her own mind, or doing anything but cloud the entire aquarium for miles around. At length (this is a perfectly true scene, & happened yesterday) F: lost her head completely & beckoned me out of the room, & begged me to tell her whether she was to tell Alix the truth, or shift along with her. My candid spirit had no doubt whatever. I said Alix must know the truth. I left F: to tell it her. It will be a blow, but Alix bears no malice, & I have a plan on foot for establishing her in a house in Edmund Street above Saxon. Who knows? His gloom & her despair meeting may build a rainbow.

Saxon's gloom has now passed beyond a joke. And it is all connected with another scene at the Club. Now here we come to delicate matters which must not be shouted across the table next time Barbara stays with you. I had just finished my toast, bought my cigarettes, & dared Lytton to break up a party of Cambridge intellects gathered round the other fire — Yes, you must be told about them. First there's Hogben the poet; a youth of genius; a thick headed but fresh coloured ardent man of perhaps 22, either hiding from the Police or a C.O. He is always at the Club, & he always has a play in a despatch box by his side; & when more than four are gathered round him, he will take this play out of the box, & after a little persuasion will lend it to a stout girl with a very large pipe. This being done, a

second girl with an enormous cleft in one cheek, coloured grey since identified, (& I've no doubt the facts responsible for the cleft) as Jos Wedgwood's daughter, throws herself on her knees & begs to be lent the play too. Hogben lends it. Next time they all get together & say how unconventional it is, & how the public can't be expected to understand, though to my elderly & sarcastic view, the public would swallow me whole & then wet that turning a hair. Well, I dared Lytton to break in upon them, which he did, by lingering ostentatiously in the background & was soon in the chair next Hogben, whose hair by the way practically grows into his left eye, so you'll know him when you see him. This being arranged Faith Fredegond & I had some intimate discourse ~~of~~ about Barbara & her faithful troop.

Poor Nick, they say, is moping & pining & longing to pull out all Saxon's feathers, & no wonder. Under the shield of immaculate altruism, that old wretch has won the prize, & refuses to own that he has, & makes an elaborate pretence of sharing, which is vinegar to poor Nick who is too high minded to protest, & has to agree to be a dis-embodied Saint. Barbara ended by repairing Nick one more, & takes no pains to hide the fact that the proper Saxon, always has Saxon about when Nick comes to town, & means to marry neither. I've no doubt that Faith makes this blacker & bitterer than it need be, & if one shrugs proper Saxon, then there is no help for it; but at the root of it, still adhering to Faith, there is nothing but a perverted wish to do what Bloomsbury approves. The Bloomsbury hypnotism, I may say, is rank, & threatens the sanity of all the Bunnies, who are perpetually feeling their head legs to see if they haven't turned into hares. I tried tactfully to explain to Faith that once a Bunny, always a Bunny; & what great Bloomsbury respects is the recognition by the B's that they are Bs. But Maggie going through a terrible season of delusion. Barbara can't bear that Nick should be seen with her in Bloomsbury. That is the height of his ambition; a dinner with Maynard would glorify him for ever. He is very humble, a devout admirer, & has taken to reading hard in order to qualify. For my part, I'm going to

ask him here, to show my deep respect for him, & then casually & tactfully to assure Barbara that he's worthy of him neither in brain nor in education. Then Duncan can imagine how gracefully this will be done. Now Saxon droops, because he's discovered that human nature is fallible; if only he didn't prefer him, he'd be quite happy. I can't help thinking that there is something rather sublime about us. I often feel very sublime myself — God, disconnected thoughts of undoubted spiritual beauty come upon me unawares.

Your lost Cockatoo (a lady in Hammersmith is offering a suitable reward for a lost Green Lovebird) came here last Sunday, with Gerald & Fredegond & we had a fine gossip. They carry out all I say about Bloomsbury hypnotism. F. & G. went over to Tidmarsh the other day, & after tea Lytton & Carrington left the room ostensibly to copulate; but suspicion was aroused by a sound of measured sound proceeding from the room, & on listening at the keyhole it was discovered that they were reading aloud Macaulays Essays! Barbara keenly has finished vol. 2 of Tom Jones, & hopes by persevering to see it through next summer in the tent at Charleston.

Sunday.

Barbara & Nick came last night, & its perfectly true what I say about his intelligence & education. He described Erasmus. Barbara thought he meant Erasmus Darwin who was killed; not a bit yet; he also talked about Cardinal Mazarin; & the works of Synge. But my tender heart was distressed to hear that Bunny has infected you all with his disease. Barbara was rather vague, & thought that Duncan & Julian & possibly you were all ill in some way. Please send a line to say if this is so. She had just seen Bunny, looking very ill. & saying that he had been ill off & on ever since the day I was there.

Spirits that I think I will end here, & keep Lady Strachey & one or two other small fragments for another time, so that I can send this off. & you may let me have a line, whenever you is able to write. The only interesting incident, however, with Lady S. was my terrible faux pas: "Have you yet been to Tidmarsh, Lady S.?" "No" she became perfectly slum & stony: & said at length, to L: "Well, what d'you think of it all?"

L: thinking she meant the relationship between Lytton & Carrington was beginning a long account of his views on buggery, when we realised that she was changing the conversation to the food famine!

V B.

NYPL HAMILL 6/1/60

? Jan 1917

I found this letter.
Leonard saw Sydney - we had him here -
but not much result - I think he is hopeless.
Not being chosen a
Monday. Apostle wrecked his
life he says.

1917

Dearest,
You didn't send me the recipes -
but never mind - perhaps you
will one day - We had
Saxon - Barbara - Adrian & Saxon last
night; & Saxon wanted to know
whether he might suggest a visit to
you on Monday, till Saturday.
He is ordered a rest; & we have
sent them Asheham, Carrington
is going with them. But
he told me that Roger
said you were overworked, &
it was therefore doubtful about
coming. I think it most likely
that you are overworked - & I do
think it a most ridiculous thing,
knowing what horror illness is. I
now take 3/2 slaves & milk daily

If you would take one, some good would be done. You use every part of you, so incessantly. I can't think how you manage visitors. But I wish you'd lend me a line to say how you really are. If you'd ever like comfortable quiet here, we both wish that you'd come. My husband is nursing a hopeful passion for you — & as for me!

NYPL

Adieu & Karin has got a place in Hertfordshire, much to their delight. Say as Barbara seems both of them on the verge of some form of melancholia, & I think you'd better not have him, as his silence & look of disease infect one after a time. However, I'm sure he meant to come. When you'll have them all over from Askham. I wonder how the Amber brats are doing. Personally,

I think its better not to teach one's own children; — are you sure you couldn't be cut one your enlightened virgins, an Olivier say, (Daphne might do) in Fiske, & make her teach everything. I meant to write a long, passionate, interesting letter, but Sayon has just rung me up, & kept me so long talking, that I must now dress. He says he's going to go — & you say you're ok right. But I don't much believe it. The fog is permanent here; by night we have the Aurora Borealis, which a man in the street took to be Zeppelins, so shouted out loud under the Servants windows. At midnight we heard them carrying their bedding to the kitchen, there to lie on the floor till day — With great difficulty we got them up again, & lectured them on the nature of northern lights. I think I must write the stories you wanted for Julian. Aunt Ina is dead.

Yr B.

I should very much like to stay with you — but I don't know when.